

## Political Ideologies

### Liberalism

- Sometimes portrayed as a **meta-ideology** because it is able to embrace a broad range of rival values and beliefs
- Consists of the break down in federalism and the growth of a market place or capitalist society
- Early liberalism = aspirations of the middle classes
- Attacks absolutism and feudal privilege – wants representative government
- 19<sup>th</sup> century – laissez-faire capitalism + limited gov. intervention
- Recently – more social state and economic intervention

### Elements of Liberalism

#### ➤ **Individualism**

- *Supreme importance of the human individual as opposed to any social group*
- *Humans are seen as individuals – all equal of moral worth*
- *Aim to develop a society where each individual can flourish with different qualities*
- *Lays down a set of rules for humans to make moral choices over*

#### ➤ **Freedom**

- *Individual freedom is given more importance than equality or justice etc.*
- *Humans must enjoy as much freedom as possible without encroaching on other's freedom (there is a need for laws)*

#### ➤ **Reason**

- *World has a rational structure*
- *Places faith in the ability of humans to make wise judgements*
- *Believe in progress – settle differences by debate and argument instead of bloodshed and war*

#### ➤ **Equality**

- *Individuals are born equal*
- *Legal equality, political equality but not social equality as everyone has different skills – equality of opportunity not outcome*
- *Talented should rule, positions should be distributed on the basis of ability*

#### ➤ **Toleration**

- *A way to protect individualism and allow social enrichment*
- *Promotes debate about issues to test each one*
- *Debate will not lead to conflict as there are usually a natural harmony between beliefs and views*

➤ **Consent**

- *Authority and social relationships should be based on willingness*
- *Favour representation and authority 'from below'*

➤ **Constitutionalism**

- *Government is needed to maintain order and stability but is aware that power can corrupt – limited government is therefore favoured*
- *Want a codified or written constitution to protect rights*

**John Locke (1632-1704)**

- *Focused on the need for natural rights – life liberty and property*
- *End of absolutist rule replaced by constitutional monarchy was a good thing*

Classical Liberalism

- Commitment to an extreme form of individualism – humans are self-reliant people
- Humans owe nothing to society or to any other individual
- Atomist view of society is applied by which a society is made up of self-sufficient individuals
- No state or government intervention – but necessary to maintain order and stability – evil because it encroaches on individualism
- Minimal government intervention is required
- Economic liberalism – markets are self-regulating bringing greater benefits for all

Modern Liberalism (John Stuart Mill)

- Big government (social and economic intervention) are seen as necessary to avoid people being abused by those in charge
- Freedom = the ability to flourish and achieve self-realization not the freedom to be left alone as this may lead to being harmed
- State intervention will therefore safeguard humans against the social evils
- Evils = want, disease, ignorance, idleness and squalor
- Laissez-faire capitalism was scrapped because of J.M. Keynes – prosperity in the markets can only be obtained through regulations and key economics being put into the hands of the state
- Aim is only to intervene when humans cannot help themselves and to bring those who cannot to a point where they can once again be self-sufficient
- Redistribution – progressive taxation for the rich and more welfare provisions for the poor.

## Conservatism

- Came about in late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> century in a reaction to the fast economic and political changes
- They wanted to return to the absolutist structures that predated the French Revolution
- Continental Europe conservatism = autocratic and reactionary politics – no reform (Joseph de Maistre)
- UK and USA = ‘change I order to conserve’ – allowed social reform under the banner of ‘one-nation’
- New Right conservatism draws on classical conservative policies

### Element of Conservatism

#### ➤ **Tradition**

- *The desire to conserve – tradition, respect for established customs and institutions that have survived through time*
- *Accumulation of wisdom from the past – tradition has been ‘tested by time’*
- *Promotes security and stability – people have a sense of social and historical belonging*

#### ➤ **Pragmatism**

- *Human rationality is limited – we cannot possibly understand the world as it is too difficult to understand*
- *Principles and systems of thought (such as ideology) are not trusted – experience is*
- *Pragmatism = actions should be shaped by practical circumstances and practical goals*
- *Their beliefs are an ‘approach to life’ or ‘attitude of mind’*

#### ➤ **Human Imperfection**

- *Human beings are limited, dependant, security seeking, drawn to familiar things, and have a need to live in stable communities*
- *Individuals are selfish, morally corrupt, greedy and have a thirst for power*
- *Crime and disorder lie with the individual not the state*
- *Maintenance of order therefore requires a strong state with strict laws and tough penalties.*

#### ➤ **Organicism**

- *Society is a living whole – not a product of human ingenuity*
- *Society is structured with necessary essentials such as families, local communities and the nation as a whole.*
- *Shared values and a common culture can also be seen as important for social cohesion.*

➤ **Hierarchy**

- *Social positioning is natural and inevitable*
- *Reflect differing roles, such as parent and child*
- *Hierarchy and inequality to not cause conflict because everyone understands their moral obligation to society*
- *Privileged have to duty to care for the less fortunate*

➤ **Authority**

- *Authority is exercised 'from above' – providing leadership, guidance and support for those who lack knowledge or experience*
- *Natural aristocracy – qualities are inbred they cannot be learnt through effort or self-advancement – however this view has now altered to mean that experience is more important*
- *Authority gives people social cohesion and sets out what is required of them*
- *Freedom must coexist with responsibility*

➤ **Property**

- *Property ownership is vital to providing people with security and independence from government*
- *Property and material possession is also an exteriorization of the people's personalities*
- *Right to have property comes with duties*

Paternalistic conservatism

- Reform from above was preferable than revolution from below – by being privileged you must perform a duty to help those who were less privileged in order to provide social cohesion.
- One-nation principle tries to maintain social cohesion and stability
- Harold Macmillan – laissez-faire capitalism but state socialism and central planning. – resulting in free markets with some government intervention to avoid selfishness
- Freedom allowed as long as it doesn't interfere with other's freedom

The New Right

- Revolution against state intervention and the spread of liberal or progressive social values
- Came about after 1970's were there was social breakdown, and a decline of authority
- Strong but minimal state

Neoliberalism

- Market and the individual

- ‘roll back the frontiers of the state’
- unregulated economy means greater prosperity and efficiency
- ‘private enterprise good, public bad’
- faith is placed in self-help and individual responsibility – no such thing as a state

### Neoconservatism

- restore authority and to return to traditional values; family, religion and the nation
- authority guarantees social stability
- opposite of neo-conservatism is leaving one to make one’s own decisions
- emergence of multicultural and multi-religious societies is dangerous
- Scepticism about multiculturalism and supranational bodies such as the EU.

### Socialism

- Came about as a political creed in early 19<sup>th</sup> century – a reaction to the growing industrial capitalism
- Interested people who worked rurally as they were worried about the spread of factories
- Goal to abolish a capitalist economy and replace it with a qualitatively different socialist society (Karl Marx)
- Reformist socialist tradition – integration of working class into capitalist society through an improvement in working conditions and wages and the growth of trade unions and socialist parties
- This is peaceful, gradual and legal transition to socialism, brought about by the parliamentary route
- Socialism is split into two categories – revisionist and humanist tradition
- Revolutionary – following Lenin and Bolsheviks – communists
- Reformists – social democracy – a different way to reach socialism

### Elements of Socialism

#### ➤ **Community**

- *Human beings as social creatures linked by the existence of common humanity*
- *Importance in community – individual personality is made up from social interaction and membership of social groups and collective bodies*
- *Emphasise nurture over nature*

#### ➤ **Fraternity**

- *Humans are bound together by a sense of comradeship or fraternity*
- *Encourages cooperation rather than competition*
- *Favour collectivism over individualism*
- *Cooperation enables people to build in their views into the community where as competition breeds resentment, conflict and hostility*

➤ **Social equality**

- *Primacy of equality over other values*
- *Social equality – equality of outcome over opportunity*
- *Gives humans a sense of individualism*

➤ **Need**

- *Material benefits should be distributed on a basis of need rather than on a basis of merit or work*
- *Belief that if basic needs of a human are fulfilled then a human will feel a purpose for existence*

➤ **Social class**

- *Analyse society on basis of wealth and therefore class is a significant*
- *Socialism has been associated with the interests of the oppressed and exploited working class*
- *A want for the eradication of economic and social inequalities or their substantial reduction*

➤ **Common ownership**

- *Either a means of generating broader equality or the end of socialism altogether*
- *Private property is an evil*

Marxism